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LB 305, 543

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Chambers, you're recognized on your motion to return LB 543 to Select File for a specific amendment.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the Legislature, this amendment is AM1893, and I promise not to take more than 18 hours and 93 minutes. What I want to do is raise an issue for the last time this session, within the rules and the circumstances under which we operate as a Legislature. If you pull this amendment up on your gadget, the first three lines will tell you...well, the first two will tell you really what this is all about. This amendment would delete \$2.7 million of funding for the Attracting Excellence to Teaching Program Act, or the loan forgiveness program. This is one of those items which should never be funded by the state. The Governor, buying time for himself, had indicated he will fund it next year, but not this year. You all have advanced LB 305 (laugh) and delivered to me a crushing defeat in the meantime. But for some reason, I cannot develop frown lines around my mouth, nor frown wrinkles in my brow; I just have to kind of smile every time I think about that crushing defeat that I suffered. It's not often that one so thoroughly put to flight, so completely defeated in detail, can react in such a magnanimous fashion. I cannot say I'm reacting in this manner because I have a death wish, but I just believe that if we hang around here long enough we're going to see something happen. Today, LB 305 is not before us, but LB 543, the appropriations bill, is. Contained in that bill is funding for a program that I think should never see the light of day. The program itself is not a good one. We have a responsibility to the public school system. This program funnels money into private schools by pretending its aim is to help teachers. I do not believe that \$2,500, which is the maximum amount that can be procured in a loan, by way of a loan through this program, is going to keep somebody in Nebraska who was not going to stay here. This is money going to people who either were going to stay here anyway, or are going to leave without even paying back the loan. All those things aside, however, it is not a wise expenditure of money. These programs that are designed to fund these private schools are becoming more and more out of control. They're making greater and greater drains on the treasury. The money in that treasury comes from the taxes paid by citizens, many of whom have no